



County of Los Angeles
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

January 8, 2004

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

Board of Supervisors
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First District

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Fifth District

THIRD QUARTERLY REVIEW OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY TISSUE SERVICES AGREEMENT

This is the third and final quarterly review of the Los Angeles County Tissue Services Agreement, which provides information from the Coroner that the newly established tissue distribution process is working without any major problems; all tissue bank participants are working together cooperatively; and finally that we support the Coroner's recommendation to extend the contract for another year.

BACKGROUND

On March 11, 2003, your Board adopted the Tissue Collection Services Contract (contract) administered by the Department of Coroner, in consultation with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and Director of Health Services. The contract is a one-year service contract with two one-year renewal options with Tissue Banks International (TBI).

Prior to the adoption of this contract, the Board ordered the creation of a CAO convened Tissue Panel of Experts in the field of tissue harvesting and distribution, to make recommendations on a number of contract issues. The Board adopted the Tissue Panels recommendations on July 17, 2001. In addition, the Board ordered the Tissue Panel to conduct quarterly reviews to ensure compliance by TBI with the terms of distribution of tissue, as well as any remaining problems which may warrant changes to the contract. Prior to the submission of the final contract for Board approval, a separate review of the contract holder's charges to the Partnered Banks was conducted by the Auditor-Controller to address concerns of overcharging. The Auditor-Controller's review, dated January 22, 2003, validated no indications of overcharging.

FINDINGS-STATUS

ROTATION

Four tissue banks continue to participate in the distribution of tissue. They are American Red Cross (ARC), Pacific Coast Tissue Bank, West Coast Tissue Services, and Tissue Banks International (TBI, contract holder). Each bank is assigned a week in which they are entitled to receive harvested tissues coming from both the Coroner and Health Services. The contract holder and other partnered banks continue their agreed upon order of rotation based on random drawing. They have agreed to honor this rotation until a participating bank requests a change.

TISSUE DISTRIBUTION

A review of the contract holder's statistical reports on tissue distribution continues to show that the accumulated totals on musculoskeletal tissue are fairly close between three of the participants, ranging from 14 to 18 cases each. The exception, American Red Cross continues to show recovery rates of only half of the others. ARC has a lower age threshold (65) on acceptable donors in this category where the other banks accept age ranges up to 75 to 85. This results in lower cases accepted by ARC which are then distributed to the remaining tissue banks based on their agreed upon order of rotation.

In general, the partnered banks are satisfied with the distribution of tissue and any variances that normally occur are a result of different criteria for each bank, which can include donor age, weight, and medical history.

CONSENT

The new contract provides that participating banks, in addition to the contract holder, may elect to perform the process of acquiring consent from the next of kin provided they have complied with existing laws, regulations and have indemnified the County, contract holder, and other parties involved. As indicated in the last report, Pacific Coast Tissue Bank has successfully complied with the above guidelines and continues to perform its own consents. ARC continues to express interest in doing consents, but has not yet returned the appropriate County documents.

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PARTNERED BANK COMMUNICATION

The contract holder, TBI, has advised the Coroner that relations with the partnered banks continue on a positive note. TBI indicates they continue to take a proactive approach in dealing with concerns raised by the partnered banks and are scheduling a meeting with them to continue an open dialogue on issues. The Coroner reports that they are not aware of any complaints or problems with the contract or partnered banks.

CONCLUSION

As a result of all parties working together in a cooperative effort and meeting all of the terms of the contract, we support the recommendation by the Coroner to exercise the first year renewal option of the tissue services contract with Tissue Banks International which is due to expire in March 2004. Furthermore, since all parties participating in this contract are actively engaged in good communication; have demonstrated success in working together through equity issues on order of rotation, as well as the distribution of tissue; we are recommending that quarterly reports are no longer necessary, however we will continue to closely monitor this contract with the Coroner and will report any further developments as necessary.

If you have any further questions, please call me or your staff may contact Ernie Miyamoto of my staff at (213) 974-1178.

DEJ:DL
RG:EM:ljp

c: Coroner
Department of Health Services

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